

Message Text

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ACTION CU-04

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FM AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6692

INFO USIA WASHDC

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SCUL, OEXC

SUBJ: AMERICA DAYS SPEAKER

REF: HELSINKI 2235; STATE 170903 AND 170817

1. APPRECIATE DEPARTMENT EFFORTS IN STATE REFTELS. WILL RETAIN HOPE SENATOR FULBRIGHT WILL ACCEPT AS HIS NAME WELL KNOWN HERE IN CONNECTION WITH THE FINNISH-U.S. EDUCATIONAL CULTURAL EXCHANGE PROGRAM WHICH RECEIVED WIDE AND HIGH-LEVEL COMMEMORATION OF 20TH ANNIVERSARY LAST YEAR. ALSO, HE EXACTLY MEETS LEAGUE CRITERIA FOR PROGRAM AND HAS BEEN APPROVED BY LEAGUE.

2. THIS TELEGRAM IS ROUNDUP AND EXPLANATION OF PRESENT SITUATION CONFRONTING EMBASSY RE AMERICA DAYS SPEAKER AND CANDID ATTEMPT TO DEPICT OUR CONCERN.

3. MRS. ARMSTRONG. THIS MATTER IS A LITTLE DIFFICULT BUT THE EMBASSY SETS FORTH IN THIS CABLE A SOLUTION. TO AUGMENT EXPLANATION OF EMBASSY'S PREDICAMENT STATED IN NUMEROUS TELCONS AND HELSINKI 2235, IT SHOULD BE UNDERSTOOD THE LEAGUE HAS CONTRACTED TO HOLD THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF ITS INCEPTION IN THE FINLANDIA HALL, WHICH HOUSED PHASE I OF THE EUROPEAN CONFERENCE ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION HERE IN JULY. THIS LARGE HALL HOLDS 1,700 PEOPLE AND FILLING IT IS NO EASY FEAT. MRS. ARMSTRONG IS AN ATTRACTIVE AND IMPORTANT AMERICAN PERSONALITY BUT SHE IS UNFORTUNATELY NOT RPT NOT KNOWN IN FIN-

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LAND. FOR THESE REASONS THE LEAGUE HAS SERIOUS PROBLEMS IN ACCEPTING STRAUS' INSISTENCE SHE BE ACCEPTED AS THE RPT THE

SPEAKER. WE HAVE PROVIDED THE DEPARTMENT THE LIST OF FORMER AMERICA DAYS SPEAKERS IN FINLAND AS AN EXAMPLE OF THE VIP CHARACTER SUCH SPEAKERS HAVE ENJOYED AS EXAMPLES OF THE TYPE SPEAKER NEEDED FOR 1973.

4. THE EMBASSY IS AWARE OF THE CU PROBLEM. MRS. ARMSTRONG SOMEHOW WAS ASKED TO BE THE SPEAKER AND ACCEPTED. THE EMBASSY AND LEAGUE WOULD WELCOME HER AS A SPECIAL GUEST FROM THE WHITE HOUSE AND AS A SPEAKER, BUT ONLY IF THE DEPARTMENT OBTAINS ANOTHER MAIN SPEAKER AS THE VIP KNOWN NAME PIECE DE RESISTANCE. IT SHOULD AGAIN BE NOTED, AS EMBASSY POINTED OUT IN HELSINKI 2235, THAT ALLOCATED FUNDS SHOULD PROVIDE FOR THE POST-REQUESTED SPEAKER. WE ASSUME THE DEPARTMENT WOULD DEFRAID MRS. ARMSTRONG'S EXPENSES.

5. EMBASSY HAD ALSO OFFERED NUMEROUS OTHER NAMES APPROVED BY LEAGUE. DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO REVIEW AND CONSIDER OFFERING INVITATIONS TO THEM.

6. IN ORDER TO ASSIST IN FURTHER SEARCH, EMBASSY HAS LEAGUE AUTHORITY TO CONTACT/INVITE FORMER U.S. AMBASSADOR TO FINLAND TYLER THOMPSON OR GEORGE F. KENNAN AS SPEAKER, OR A U.S. SENATOR FROM MICHIGAN OR MINNESOTA, BOTH STATES WITH LARGE FINNISH-AMERICAN CONSTITUENCIES.

7. WE REPEAT WE SHOULD BE DELIGHTED TO HAVE MRS. ARMSTRONG BUT WE NEED ANOTHER SPEAKER TOO, A NAME.
KREHBIEL

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